

Message Text

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46

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FM AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6701

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, EGEN, EI

SUBJECT: NATIONAL PAY AGREEMENT REACHED

1. THE 1975 NATIONAL PAY AGREEMENT FOR IRELAND CAME INTO EFFECT APRIL 22 FOLLOWING ACCEPTANCE BY EMPLOYERS' REPRESENTATIVES IN THE EMPLOYER/LABOR CONFERENCE. THE AGREEMENT WILL TAKE EFFECT AS SETTLEMENTS REACHED UNDER THE 1974 AGREEMENT EXPIRE AND WILL REMAIN IN EFFECT FOR ONE YEAR. AGREEMENT ALLOWS FOR QUARTERLY PAY INCREASES RELATED TO COST OF LIVING INDEX AND COVERS APPROXIMATELY 450,000 WORKERS. UNDER PROVISIONS OF THE AGREEMENT PAY INCREASES FOR THE YEAR COULD AMOUNT TO AS MUCH AS 23 PERCENT. IN ACCEPTING THE AGREEMENT, EMPLOYERS EXPRESSED GREAT CONCERN OVER THE SIZE OF THE PROPOSED PAY INCREASES AND THE EFFECTS THEY WILL HAVE ON COMPETITIVENESS OF IRISH INDUSTRY, GENERAL LEVEL OF EMPLOYMENT AND REATE OF INFLATION.

2. FIRST PHASE OF AGREEMENT EFFECTIVE FROM APRIL 1 AND PROVIDES PAY INCREASE OF 8 PERCENT TO ABOUT 135,000 WORKERS IN A BROAD CROSS SECTION OF TRANSPORT AND INDUSTRY. ANOTHER 235,000 WILL BENEFIT AS OF JUNE 1, AND THE REMAINDER COVERED BY THE AGREEMENT WILL RECEIVE INCREASES IN AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER.

3. NATIONAL PAY AGREEMENT PROVIDES FOR PAY INCREASES ROUGHLY
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IN LINE WITH ANTICIPATED RATE OF INFLATION IN IRELAND THIS YEAR.

WHILE PAY INCREASES ARE SUBSTANTIAL AND PERHAPS EXCESSIVE
IN TERMS OF PRODUCTIVITY, NATIONAL PAY AGREEMENT NEVERTHELESS
OFFERS A MEASURE OF STABILITY ON THE LABOR FRONT FOR THE COMING
YEAR. MOORE

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